



Meaning and purpose

In a nutshell: *Meaning and purpose are precursors for emotional wellbeing and help you recover better from negative life events.*

The most common sources for finding meaning and purpose in life, across cultures and age groups, has often been cited to relationships with family. The absence of meaning – ‘meaninglessness’ can lead to a negative path leading to depression, anxiety, addiction, aggression, hopelessness, apathy, lower levels of well-being, physical illness and even suicide.

Finding meaning and purpose in life is more sustainable and rewarding in the long term than trying to be ‘happy’. Looking inwards and asking yourself what really matters to you, is a good starting point to having more meaning and purpose in your life. This is one way of connecting to your values, even if it means identifying just one key value that is important.

Just find one to begin with and build from there. It could be family, creativity, simplicity. Once you identify a value, ask yourself – are my choices aligning with my value/s. If for instance, ‘family’ is your value – then how much time are you spending with them? In that time, are you present in the moment or distracted, are you attentive?

Another strategy that can prove to be helpful is to reverse engineer what matters to you. It is called “deathbed consciousness” – imagining yourself at the end of this life, what would ultimately matter? The superficial things won’t, but the relationships will. Imagine if someone were to say your eulogy – what would you want them to say? Does that reflect the life you are living today?

Put into practice: *Identify a value that you want to nurture. List down three things you will do to nurture this value. Revisit at the end of the month. Reflect and try again. Practice makes perfect.*

LINK: “The Science of Meaning and Purpose”

<https://focuswrx.com/the-science-of-meaning-purpose/>

AXA is committed to help people to become ‘fit to flourish’. To learn more, click [here](#).

- By Allison Heiliczer, *Rethink The Couch*.